

THE EFFECT OF MICROTEACHING STRATEGY ON RAUDHATUL ATHFAL TEACHERS' SPEAKING SKILLS IN TEACHING ENGLISH

Yulnetri

English Department of IAIN Batusangkar

Email: ummuhana73@gmail.com



ABSTRACT

Recently, teaching English for young learners becomes more favorable in Indonesia. Many schools starting from pre schools and kindergartens have inserted the English subject as the local content in their curriculum. However, as the preliminary research, it was found that the teachers were lacking of qualification as teachers for EYL. Assuming that microteaching strategy is effective on improving the teachers' language as well as teaching competences, the writer did a quasi experimental research to 18 kindergarten teachers in Tanah Datar Regency. In order to find out the effectiveness, the sample was given pre-test and post test of speaking skill. As the result, based on the output of t-test score with value of Sig. (2-tailed) or P-value = 0.000<<< (significance level 0.05), it was concluded that statistically H_0 was rejected and H_a was accepted. It means there was a significant difference of the pre test mean score (14,89) and the post-test mean score (26,7). Therefore the microteaching strategy was effective to improve the Raudhatul Athfal teachers' speaking skill in teaching English for young learners.

Key words: Raudhatul Adhfal, microteaching strategy, and speaking skills

BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

Recently teaching English for young learners becomes more favorable in Indonesia. Decentralization of education in Indonesia has encouraged local governments to make their own decisions relative to some portion of curricular space in the form of the use of some learning hours for what has become known as a local content (Musthafa 2010:1). As a result of this decentralization policy, many districts and city governments are interested in teaching English to young learners (EYL). This is evidenced by the increasing number of preschools and kindergartens which offer English classes.

Many schools starting from pre schools and kindergartens have inserted English subject in their curriculum. This might happen based on an assumption that introducing English, as a foreign language, early to young learners gives some benefits. According to Wright (2004) there are a number of advantages of teaching foreign language,

particularly English, earlier such as preparing children with English for their secondary school, and enhancing and making use children's learning potentials-considering golden age or critical period. Therefore, rendering English to children is a wise and right decision.

The process of teaching English for young learners is equivalent with the one in second language acquisition. It has been understood that the success for teaching English for young learners (as SLA) is determined by several factors. Ellis (1985) identifies the factors include socio-cultural factors, learner differences, language input, learner processes, and language output. Among these factors, language input is considered to be the most important.

Moreover Ellis in Cahyono (2011) defines input as the samples of oral and written language a learner is exposed to while learning or using a particular target language. In other words, input serves as the raw materials that

should be processed by the language learners in order to be able to communicate and provides models of language suitable with the second language learners' level of language development.

As stated previously that language input has a significant role in second language acquisition. It influences the young learners' English language later on. However, this will become a big problem for the young learners who are learning English if the teachers cannot provide good input for them to learn. It means, the teachers should have their own skills of English before trying to teach the learners that language.

Aligned with the introduction of foreign languages to young learners, the necessity to prepare teachers has risen (Vojtcova 2008:93). This TEYL program is necessary to be well prepared. Qualified and competent teachers are necessary to be prepared for the implementation of this curriculum. There is a need of training for teachers of English at elementary schools. Malkina (2008:33) asserts that in order to be qualified to teach English as a foreign language at elementary school, teachers have to attend teachers' college or complete their university studies

It might be also said, teaching foreign language, in particular English, for young learners presents a number of challenges. One of the challenges is educating teachers with sufficient English skills and knowledge of language teaching methodology. Teachers need to be confident and willing to use English in the classroom in order to increase children exposure to the natural use of English in communication.

Moreover Vale and Feunteun (2012: 6) classify typical points raised by the teachers of English to children, namely 1) teachers with EYL experience, but with no experience of working with children, 2) teachers with experience of teaching children, but with little or no experience of teaching EFL, and 3) teachers who are training to teach EFL, possibly to children. In Indonesia, EYL teachers are classified into three types, namely: 1) classroom teachers who have not been to English teaching college, 2) English

teachers who attend English teaching college but have no experience working with children, and 3) teachers who have English background and experience working with children (Suyanto 2009: 33).

In current situation regarding the education of English teachers is far from satisfactory. According to the interview of educational background of language teachers in pre schools and kindergarten in Tanah Datar regency, none has formal English background. It was found that 10% of the teachers who have got training to teach English for young learners.

Department of *Pendidikan Guru Raudhatul Adfal (PGRA)* IAIN Batusangkar is a teaching department specializing at preparing its students to become teachers teaching young learners in pre schools or kindergartens. Ideally English is taught by an English teacher. As the matter fact, as found in many schools in Tanah Datar regency, English is taught by the Raudhatul Adfal (preschool and kindergarten) teachers whose background is not English. That is the reason of PGRA department to include English subject in the curriculum. In order to enable the teachers to teach English, based on the curriculum, the students are offered English for Young Children subject. The subject is aimed at providing the participants knowledge and basic skills in teaching English for young learners.

Based on the preliminary interview, this subject is relatively difficult because, according to the participants, they have a very limited ability of English, especially in vocabulary mastery and speaking skill. Then, they have no idea how and what to teach in English. Once, the researcher observed that many of them refused to demonstrate how to teach a given teaching material in front of the class.

Moreover PGRA of IAIN Batusangkar is handling a program specializing for teachers of young learners who want to upgrade their diploma. The participants are preschool and kindergarten teachers in Tanah Datar regency, who want to get diploma (S1) degree. While teaching the English for Young Children subject, the researcher found that almost all of

the teachers had insufficient capability in English especially in speaking. While being interviewed about how they teach English, they answered that they just use Bahasa Indonesia, and ask the students to remember the English word and its translation. Preliminarily, they were asked to show to the class the way they teach, all of them were reluctant. They asked for excuses because, as they said, they could not pronounce in correct pronunciation.

Due to the problems elaborated, the researcher as the lecturer of English for Early Young Lerner tried to develop a teaching strategy that can be useful in developing their speaking skills. One of the alternatives is microteaching strategy. One of the alternatives is microteaching strategy. By having microteaching strategy, the student teachers are provided an opportunity to experience the real teaching of English using that language. According to Remesh (2011) Microteaching provides teachers an opportunity to perk up their teaching skills by improving the various simple tasks called teaching skills. Then, Singh, L.C. (1977) states that Micro-teaching is a scaled down teaching encounter in which a teacher teaches a small unit to a group of five pupils for a small period of 5-20 minutes. The core skills of microteaching such as presentation and reinforcement skills help the novice teachers to learn the art of teaching at ease and to the maximum extent.

In this case, the research focused on the teacher students' communicative skills, i.e., speaking skills in English. Moreover, such a situation offers a helpful setting for an experienced or inexperienced teacher to acquire new teaching skills and to refine old ones. In short, having done surveys, the researcher does not find the same research conducted. Therefore, based on the phenomena elaborated previously, the researcher is interested in conducting a research entitled, "Micro Teaching Strategy in Developing *Raudhatul Adhfal* Teachers' Speaking Skills in Teaching English".

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

1. Teaching English for Young Learners

a. Characteristics of Young Learners

Young learners are children between the ages of about 5 years old to 12 years old (Rixon in Ma'mun, 2011), while according to Lynne Cameron; young learners are those under 14 years old. Moreover, the definition of young learners mainly based on the years spent in the primary or elementary stages of formal education before the transition to secondary school. This is assumed that the definition of young learners can be varied from one country to the others.

Teaching young learners is not the same with teaching the adult ones. It creates a more challenging task. Young learners have their own characteristics. According to Brendon (2012) there are general characteristics that the teacher should know, as follows:

1. They have short attention span. Then the teachers should vary their techniques to break the boredom.
2. They are active. Then the teacher should engage them into physical activities. Ask them to play simple games, role play and involve them in competitions.
3. They respond well to praising. The teacher should always encourage them and praise their work.
4. They differ in their experience of language.
5. They are less shy than older learners.
6. They are imaginative. The teachers should use pictures to teach new vocabulary related to concrete meanings, but may have some difficulties distinguishing between imagination and real world.
7. They enjoy learning through playing.
8. They have limited reading and writing skills even in their first language.
9. They generally are concerned more about themselves and others. The teachers are suggested to teach the value of individual differences. Frequently teach them the value of family and friendship.
10. They limited knowledge about the world. The teachers should use discussion activities that will encourage thinking, such as simple riddles and guessing

games. The teachers also should introduce new words and have them draw pictures related to the word.

11. They enjoy fantasy, imagination and movement

Thus as young learner teachers, we should pay attention to the teaching activities that give more chances for them to do learning through playing. The teachers must avoid monotonous learning activities and materials in their class.

Then, as found in <http://www.teachingenglishgames.com> the characteristics of young learners are as follows:

1. Preschool children have a very short attention span.
2. Preschool children will forget things quickly
3. Preschool children may not be fully confident in their own language
4. Some of the preschool children may not be motivated to learn
5. They may be fearful
6. Preschool children develop at very different rates

In conclusion, one of the most salient differences between adult and children is attention span. The short attention spans come up only when the teachers present stuff that to them is boring, useless or too difficult. Since language lesson can sometimes be difficult, the teachers should try to make the lesson more interesting, live and fun.

- b. Factors Influencing the Success of Teaching English for Young Learners.

According to Ashaworth in Ririn Pusparini (2011:223) that there are some factors that influence children in learning a language, those are as follows;

- 1). Age Factor

This factor influences a lot in language acquisition speed. It means that there is a relationship between learning speed and age. Fathman in Dulay (1982:85) says that children in the first year, five

to seven years old, can master language phonology more than the adults.

- 2). Cognitive Factor

Piaget in Dulay (1982:91) states that the early age, five to seven years old students are in pre-operational stages, that is a process of logical thinking and it is mental activities not sensoric motor. It means in learning a language, it should be more focused on rote activities, without asking to think so hard. The teachers should not involve the children in deeply meaningful communication.

- 3). Affective Factor

The children affective factor is on the egocentric role in their development. It means that their world is about them themselves. Most of the children are very self-centered.

- 4). Environment Factor

According to Dulay (1982:93) that children are easily accept "here and now language". This principle explains that the children can quickly understand something around them and at the right moment.

In conclusion, there are four significant factors influencing the success of teaching English to young learners. thus, the young learner teachers should give positive inputs to their students since this age is crucial period of the children's development. In terms of teaching English, the teachers must have good capability in speaking as inputs for their learners while learning English.

2. Speaking Skills

- a. Definition of Speaking Skill

The phrase speaking skill derives from two words; speaking and skill. Speaking is a productive skill that involves exchanging ideas between a speaker and the listener. According to Nunan (2003:48) speaking is the productive aural or oral skill. The same idea also comes from Brown (2004:140) that speaking is a productive skill that can be directly observed in terms of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation.

Moreover speaking is a complex skill which involves a number of different skills. As stated to able to speak the speaker must possess pronunciation skill, grammar, and vocabulary. It also involves a process of communication which convey the message or information and depress ideas from the speaker to the listener.

In conclusion, speaking as an interactive communication requires the ability to manage the speaking turns and it takes place in real time, with little time for detailed planning. The speaker expresses his/her ideas directly in oral way. In such a way, it can be said that speaking is an action of conveying information or expressing one's thought and feelings both speaker and listener through putting some words in a sentence expressed in verbal language.

b. How to Test and Measure Speaking Skills

According to Brown in Suswati and Nina (2013) there are five types of speaking assessment:

1. Imitative Speaking

At one end of a continuum of types of speaking performance is the ability to simply parrot back (imitate) a word or phrase or possibly a sentence. The imitative speaking can scored as follows:

2	Acceptable pronunciation
1	Comprehensible, partially correct pronunciation
0	Silence, seriously incorrect pronunciation

2. Intensive Speaking

A second type of speaking frequently employed in assessment context is the production of short stretches (not more than a sentence) of oral language designed to demonstrate competence in a narrow band of grammatical, phrasal, lexical, or phonological relationship. The test can be in kinds of directed response tasks, read aloud tasks, sentence/dialog completion

tasks, picture-cued tasks, and translation (of liited streches of discourse)

The rubrics can be modifies as follows:

2	Comprehensible; acceptable target form
1	Comprehensible; partially correct target form
0	Silence; or seriously incorrect target form

3. Responsive Speaking

Responsive assessment tasks include interaction and test comprehension but at the somewhat limited level of very short conversations, standard greetings, simple requests and comments, and small talks.

4. Interactive Speaking

Interactive tasks are what someone would describe as interpersonal speech events. The tasks are; interview, role play, discussion and conversation, and games.

5. Extensive Speaking

Extensive speaking tasks involve complex, relatively lengthy stretches of discourse. They are frequently variatios of monologues, usually with minimal verbal interaction. This kind of assessment includes more transactional speech events, such as; oral presentation, picture-cued story telling, retelling a story, news event, and translation (extended prose)

Moreover, academic monologues can be identified in presentation of a report, a paper, a marketing plan, a sales idea, a design of new product, or a method. Since microteaching has similar nuanse with oral presentation, the researcher takes the rubric to score the teachers' speaking skill.

Here is the presentation checklist:

Score :

- 3 Excellent
- 2 Good
- 1 Fair
- 0 Poor

Content:

- The purpose or objective of the presentation was accomplished (PUR)

- The introduction was lively and got my attention (INTR)
- The main idea or point was clearly stated from the beginning (MI)
- The supporting points were clearly expressed and supported well by facts (SUPP)

Delivery:

- The speaker used gestures and body language (GS)
- The speaker maintained eye contact with the audience (EC)
- The speaker's language was natural and fluent (LG)
- The speaker's volume of speech was appropriate (VS)
- The speaker's rate of speech was appropriate (RS)
- The speaker's pronunciation was clear and comprehensible (PR)
- The speaker's grammar was correct didn't prevent understanding (GR)
- The speaker used visual aids effectively (MD)
- The speaker showed enthusiasm and interest. (EI)

As the respondents were under academic monolog circumstances, these criteria are considered to be appropriate for scoring the teachers' speaking skills in teaching English.

3. Micro Teaching Strategy in Developing Speaking Skills

a. Concepts of Micro Teaching Strategy

Micro-teaching has been defined in a number of ways. Some selected definitions are given. According to Allen, D.W (1966) Micro-teaching is a scaled down teaching encounter in class size and class time. Then, Allen, D.W. and Eve, A.W. (1968) state that Micro-teaching as a system of controlled practice that makes it possible to concentrate on specified teaching behavior and to practices teaching under controlled conditions. Moreover, Bush, R.N (1968) defines that Micro-teaching is a teacher education technique which allows teachers to apply clearly defined

teaching skills to carefully prepared lessons in a planned series of 5-10 minutes encounter with a small group of real students, often with an opportunity to observe the result on video-tape. In different sources, Singh, L.C.(1977) defines Micro-teaching as a scaled down teaching encounter in which a teacher teaches a small unit to a group of five pupils for a small period of 5-20 minutes. Such a situation offers a helpful setting for an experienced or inexperienced teacher to acquire new teaching skills and to refine old ones.

Micro-teaching is a training concept that can be applied at the pre-service and in-service stages in the professional development of teachers. Micro-teaching provides teacher with a practice setting for instruction in which the normal complexities of class-room are reduced and in which the teacher receives a great deal of feedback on his performance. To minimize the complexities of the normal teaching encounter, several dimensions are limited. The length of the lesson is reduced. The scope of the lesson is narrowed, and the teacher teaches only a few students.

Basically in micro-teaching, the trainee is engaged in a scaled-down teaching situation. It is scaled down in terms of class size, since the trainee is teaching a small group of 5-10 pupils. The lesson is scaled down in length of class-time and is reduced to 5-10 minutes. It is also scaled down in terms of teaching tasks. These tasks may include the practicing and mastering of a specific teaching skill such as lecturing or teaching explanation, questioning or leading a discussion; mastering of specific teaching strategies; flexibility, instructional decision making, alternative uses of specific curricula, instructional materials and class- room management. Only one

skill or task is taken up at a time. If possible micro-lesson is video-taped or tape-recorded. The student-teacher immediately views his/her lesson, evaluates it, amends his/her approach, reteaches the lesson to another group of pupils, reviews and evaluates. To sum up, it might be said that microteaching strategy is a small unit, not more than 20 minutes, version of teaching activities aiming at training the teacher a particular teaching skills.

b. How to Implement Micro Teaching Strategy

According to Allen and Ryan (1969: 1-3) microteaching has the following characteristics:

1. It is a real teaching situation.
2. It reduces the complexity of the real classroom teaching situation in terms of the number of students, the amount of time and the amount of learning contents.
3. It emphasizes training for mastery of teaching activities such as skills, techniques, methods, and curriculum selection.
4. It offers better control over practicing teaching activities because many factors easily can be manipulated to attain this greater degree of control in the training program.
5. The feedback dimension is expanded considerably because the student can receive meaningful feedback immediately after his performance.

Microteaching is an instrument for teacher training. It offers the students the opportunity to practice teaching activities under controlled and stimulated circumstances such that the complexity of the real teaching situation. This is the newly designed strategy which seems to be a content-based one where the integration of language and content throughout a sequence of language levels is made. This is particularly useful since it has the potential to address the gaps occurring when teachers learn teaching

methodologies but have limited language levels. Based on these, the writer improves and varies the microteaching strategy which has already developed in some parts in accordance with the kinds of subject matters taught in schools, as well as the language level.

There are three phases of Micro Teaching:

1. Knowledge acquisition

This is the first phase of microteaching. It includes collection of data related to the required skills in a rational manner as a classroom component. The teacher learners may read various literatures about what should be done and prepared for a teaching process. She or he should have knowledge about current curriculum, syllabus design, teaching materials, media, and assessment.

2. Skill acquisition

Under this phase the teacher learners are asked to prepare lessons and practice skills. They should consult the syllabus before hand. Then they decide what material they teach and write it down in a lesson plan. In addition, they should include the settings, such as the length of the lesson, the duration of the class, and the skill to be obtained. Then, they demonstrate in front of the class. The most important points at this phase are supervising and feedback.

3. Transferring phase

This is the last phase of microteaching. The teacher learners come out in real situation, which is not controlled. Here the teacher learners apply all theories in teaching in a real classroom with the real students.

Moreover, to be specific, since the target of this project is to develop the teacher learners' speaking ability in teaching English, this module is designed to help them focus on the skill acquisition phase. The first phase has been discussed in other particular session, called Curriculum and Material Development.

According to the technical guidance of microteaching published in IAIN Batusangkar, the teaching activities are classified into three phases:

- a. Opening phase
- b. Whilst teaching phase
- c. Closing phase,

The writer helps the learners with certain expressions and guidances at each phase in

order to improve their communicative and linguistic competences. The module introduces the expressions from the basic ones, therefore it can be used by the teachers with the very basic English ability. Try to remember all expressions, and practice to pronounce them with your partner.

The Microteaching strategy which was developed was rather the same with the strategy in the microteaching designed by Tarbiyah faculty of IAIN Batusangkar. In this case, the researcher developed the module, in which the steps are the same, in addition to that, she wrote a number of simple languages could be used by the teachers whose language skill is very basic.

RESEARCH METHOD

This article focuses on describing the effectiveness of microteaching strategy in teaching speaking, as a part of Research and Development activities. The development model that was used in this research was that of ADDIE (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation) (Dick, Carey, and Carey, 2001).

The proposed microteaching strategy was implemented to the teacher learners who were kindergarten teachers in Tanah Datar regency, as the population and sample of the research. They were following accelerating program to continue their study to Bachelor degree. Their number was 18 persons. The researcher conducted a quasi experiment in order to test its effectiveness.

This phase measures the validity and effectiveness of the instruction used in the *Microteaching strategy*. To find out the effectiveness of the proposed teaching strategy the researcher compared the result of pre test and the post test. The result was analyzed quantitatively, by using Paired T-Test. A quasi-experimental design called *non equivalent control group design* was implemented since the researcher has to agree to keep existing classrooms intact (Gay, Mills, and Airasian, 2011: 270). The experimental result in the forms of the teacher learners' speaking skill scores were analyzed through statistical analysis by using t-test formula to compare whether the result after testing the strategy exceeds the result of that before

testing the strategy of the pre experimental group. If the mean score of the post-test is higher than that of the pre-test, it can be concluded that Microteaching strategy is effective for developing teacher learners' speaking skills in teaching English.

Before using and testing the strategy to the population, the researcher tested the instrument validity. She asked for two validators who were experts of teaching design. They validated the strategy which was designed in a kind of teaching module. She developed validation sheets as well as the module, then she asked the validators to validate it based on certain criteria. Based on the notes of the validators the module was revised and after that be ready to test to the population of the research.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

1. Research Findings

Before conducting the experiment, the research validated the instruments. Since the researcher developed a teaching strategy There were two components validated, that is the content and its language. In terms of its contents, the first validator gave 3.5 and the second one gave 3.3. As the result the first component was categorized valid with the mean score 3.4. Meanwhile the second components; its language was 2.6 and 3.75 with the mean score 3.8. It was categorized as valid. The mean score for both components was 3.3

As the result, both of validators suggested to improve the product to become more attractive, and communicative. The language, especially English should be adjusted with the teachers' language level. Based on the suggestions, the researcher insert Indonesian terms in some parts. Then, she also provided a number of relevant expressions which might be used in the teaching and the learning process.

The final steps in implementing this module was the test of effectivity. The researcher did a quasi experimental research, because it had only one class in the accelerating program. She did a pre-test of speaking skill before conducting the experiment which was initiated with a

hipothesis, that is the microteaching strategy is effective in improving RA teachers' speaking skills in teaching English. The teachers individually were asked to stand in front of the class, then demonstrated how they taught their students. The researcher used speaking skill indicators proposed by Brown in Suswati and Nina Suzanne (2013). They gained the mean score of their speaking ability 14,89 (in the following figure)

Furthermore, the researcher conducted the experiment by introducing the

microteaching strategy. The strategy was implemented in ten meetings. After the experiment was done, she did the post-test. The teachers were asked to demonstrate the way they taught English to their students. As suggested by Remesh (1994) that the final procedure of microteaching is transferring process in which the teacher learners implemented it in the real class to the real students. Thus, the mean score increased to 26,7. It was significantly increased as described in the following figure:

Paired Samples Statistics

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 Pre-test	14.8889	18	3.86369	.91068
Post-test	26.6667	18	5.11054	1.20457

As the result, based on the output of t-test score with value of Sig. (2-tailed) or P-value = 0.000<<< α (significance level 0.05), it

was concluded that statistically H_0 was rejected and H_a was accepted as shown in the following figure:

Paired Samples Correlations

	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1 Pretest & Posttest	18	.793	.000

It is notified that after doing the analysis of product moment it was found, the coefficient correlation between the post and pre-test result was 0,793 which is highly significant. It means there was a significant difference of the pre test mean score (14,89) and the post-test mean score (26,7). Therefore the microteaching strategy developed in a kind of teaching module was effective to improve the Raudhatul Athfal teachers', whose English was very basic, speaking skills in teaching English for young learners.

2. Conclusion

The purpose of the research is to find out whether microteaching strategy is effective in teaching speaking for the Raudhatul Athfal teachers in Tanah Datar regency. After giving treatments to the experimental group, and then comparing the result of the control group, it was found that hypothesis alternative was accepted. It can be concluded that the

microteaching strategy is effective to teach speaking, especially for the RA teachers in Tanah Datar regency.

SUGGESTIONS

1. EYL lecturer
Since the biggest problem of EYL is the lack of teachers' proficiency in English, lack of prior knowledge, and practical experience, the lecturer is suggested to create a meaningful strategy or media to facilitate them in their teaching.
2. Teacher learners
It is recommended to employ the microteaching strategy in the process of teaching and learning English, especially in English for Early Young Children subject. It is theoretically effective and valid in helping them to teach English for their students.
3. Further research

Due to the limited time and financial, this research just limits its focus on the small parts of EYL. Due to the wide range of English for Young Learners studies, it is suggested to the next researcher to do many other related studies in EYL.

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